

RESIDENTIAL QUALIFICATIONS

Fifth Report
of the Housing Management Sub-Committee
of the
Central Housing Advisory Committee



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HOUSING MANAGEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE

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* Mr. Brooke resigned from the Sub-committee after their third meeting, following his appointment as Financial Secretary to the Treasury, and Mr. Leigh-Breese was appointed Chairman of the Sub-committee in his place.

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Introduction

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. We were appointed by the Central Housing Advisory Committee in May, 1954, 'to review the recommendations made in the Third Report of the Housing Management Sub-Committee with reference to the question of residential qualifications required by certain local authorities ; to investigate the practice and experience of local authorities in dealing with unsatisfactory tenants and housing applicants, and with regard to evictions ; and to make recommendations'.

We have decided to deal with the subjects covered by the terms of reference in two separate reports, of which this on residential qualifications is the first.

COMPOSITION OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE

2. On his appointment as Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Mr. Henry Brooke, M.P., was obliged to resign from the Committee. His knowledge and experience of housing and his understanding of people have been of very great benefit to the Sub-Committee during his chairmanship, and we deeply regret that we were deprived of his guidance at the end of our third meeting.

EVIDENCE

3. As a first step we invited evidence by means of a press notice from individuals or organisations wishing to submit it. A questionnaire was then sent to 92 local authorities to discover what residential requirements applicants for houses were expected to fulfil. The authorities were broadly representative of the different parts of the country but we placed greater emphasis in our selection on the urban areas. In addition, we sought the views of the Association of Municipal Corporations, the Urban District Councils Association and the Rural District Councils Association. To obtain information about the difficulties of regular servicemen in making application to housing authorities we asked the Service Departments, the Ministry of Labour and National Service, the Soldiers', Sailors' and Airmen's Families Association, the British Legion, and the National Association for the Employment of Regular Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen to give us the benefit of their experience. We were also fortunate enough to have available the report in Hansard of the debate in the House of Commons on 30th July, 1954, on Housing Lists and Ex-Service Men. At a later stage we had the advantage of receiving oral evidence from five local authorities and from the Service Departments.

4. A complete list of those who submitted evidence is given in Appendix I. We acknowledge our indebtedness to them all for their help and co-operation, which has been of great assistance to us in the preparation of this Report.

5. The third report of the Sub-Committee, which was commended to the study of local authorities by the Minister of Health in Circular 31/49, dealt among other matters with the whole question of the selection of tenants. In sending this Report to local authorities the Minister of Health referred to residential qualifications and the hardship which might result from their application. In the words of Circular 31/49, 'the Minister deprecates this practice, and trusts that the Council will give serious consideration to the Sub-Committee's recommendations on this point'. By our terms of reference on this occasion we were directed to review the recommendations about residential qualifications which are contained in paragraphs 13 and 14. We refer to them as recommendations I and II of the Third Report and they are as follows:—

I. 'We consider that all restrictions on admission to local authorities' waiting-lists for houses should be abolished as soon as conditions permit. We recommend that, as a first step towards complete abolition, all local authorities should immediately reduce their restrictions on admission to the waiting-list to a uniform level, and should accept an application from any person who, at the date of application, has lived in the district for one year or more or is employed or to be employed there'.

II. 'We think it necessary to recommend that local authorities should ensure that, once an applicant is admitted to the waiting-list, his prospects of accommodation are not prejudiced because undue weight is attached to long residence when tenants are selected'.

6. One further recommendation which is relevant to our present review is contained in paragraph 7 of the Third Report: 'We consider that in present conditions of acute housing shortage the primary consideration in selecting tenants should be to ensure that local authorities' houses are let to the applicants in the greatest housing need'.

7. Before making the recommendations about residential qualifications the Sub-Committee drew attention to the variety of qualifications for admission to the lists required by different local authorities, and considered the reasons advanced for imposing restrictions. They expressed the view that the duty of a local authority to relieve the unsatisfactory housing conditions of persons resident in the area should extend to all those resident in the area, and not be restricted to those who fulfilled particular residential requirements. They held that employment in the area entitled an applicant to consideration for a house, that it was undesirable to restrict the mobility of labour by imposing rigid residential qualifications, and they pointed to the disadvantages of closed lists and the difficulties created by lack of uniformity in residential requirements.

MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT CIRCULAR 8/52†

8. Since the publication of the Third Report the Minister of Housing and Local Government has asked local authorities to ensure that service men and women should not be prejudiced in making applications for houses by their

* The Selection of Tenants and Transfers and Exchanges—1949. H.M. Stationery Office. Price 6d. net, by post 7d.

† The Circular is reprinted in full as Appendix II.

inability to satisfy a rigid residential qualification. He recommended that service applicants should be given equal priority with others on the basis of relative housing need; in considering the allocation of houses local authorities should count the head of the family, away on service, as part of the family for determining priority, although accommodation need not necessarily be provided for him unless his return were imminent.

PART I

Recommendations I and II of the Third Report

THE DIFFICULTIES CREATED BY RESIDENTIAL QUALIFICATIONS

9. Early in our investigation cases were brought to our notice where families had been unable to gain admission to the housing waiting-list of any local authority. Originally resident in one district they had moved to another—perhaps because the head of the family had changed his employment and wished to live nearer to his new work. They had been refused admission to the waiting-list of their new local authority because they did not satisfy the residential requirements demanded from applicants. Their former local authority had in the meanwhile removed their name from their list because they were no longer resident in the district. For housing purposes they had become ‘stateless persons’.

10. Prominent in the ranks of the ‘stateless persons’ are the regular sailors, soldiers and airmen who have severed their connections with their home towns, and whose wives—particularly if they have been living in married quarters—may have done the same. Even where the wife has not been able to join her husband, and has therefore acquired a residential qualification in her own right, it may not be in a district where her husband can find satisfactory employment when he leaves the service.

11. Perhaps the most exasperating situation presents itself to the family who have always lived in the same general locality, probably in one of the big centres of population where local government boundaries have tended to become a little artificial, but who from time to time change their address as they move from one set of furnished rooms to another. Inadvertently they cross a ‘line on a map’, enter the area of another local authority, and in consequence have to start acquiring a new residential qualification.

12. The period to be spent as a ‘stateless person’ may be quite short; it will depend on the period of residence required by the local authority. But some authorities require qualifications of 5 years residence or more, and if the qualification is determined by a fixed date—for example residence in 1948—then many families have no hope of ever qualifying for admission to the list. Their only chance of being considered for a local authority house would lie in their removal to a place where the local authority apply less rigorous standards.

13. The requirement of a lengthy period of residence before an application can be accepted may impose considerable hardship on particular families. A period of several years is not uncommon, and local authorities do not usually

relax their requirements. In consequence, families whose housing need certainly appears to some observers to be quite desperate cannot be considered by their authority until they have been resident for the due period of time. This appears to us much as if one should say to a man who is ill that he must wait six months before he can see a doctor.

14. We are aware, of course, that admission to the list is only the beginning of the process of obtaining a local authority tenancy ; the applicant's prospects of obtaining a house will still depend on his present housing conditions and the council's system of allocation. But the results of not admitting families to the waiting-list—particularly when the refusal is based on lack of residential qualification, a consideration which is completely irrelevant to the test of housing need—may be extremely harsh. We have been particularly disturbed to receive evidence of cases of apparently considerable need where patients suffering from active pulmonary tuberculosis and living in bad conditions have been unable to get on any local authority's waiting-list because they did not satisfy their normal residential requirements. The plight of such families emphasises the fundamental weakness of any system of residential qualification which is applied at all strictly: it is almost certain to exclude a number of families whose existing housing conditions properly merit consideration by the local authority.

15. The point we wish to make at the outset of this report is that until applications are admitted to the list for investigation and consideration there can be no assurance that houses will in fact be let to those in greatest need.

THE PRACTICE OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES

16. There emerged from the evidence submitted by the local authorities whom we consulted four main points which are listed below :—

- (1) About half the authorities in our selection (which it must be emphasised gave predominance to urban authorities, particularly to London authorities) have a residential qualification of no more than one year. As we expected, the longer residential qualifications are very largely though by no means entirely an urban requirement.
- (2) A substantial number of authorities will accept employment in the district as an alternative qualification to residence.
- (3) A large proportion of local authorities relax their residential qualifications either completely or to some degree when dealing with applications from servicemen.
- (4) There is a wide variation of residential requirements among local authorities. The usual form of qualification requires the applicant to have lived continuously for a certain number of years in the district. The most favoured periods, one year apart, are three years and five years. There are, however, a small number of authorities who have devised ingenious variations: they ask for, say, six years residence out of the last twelve; or a total of ten not necessarily consecutive years of residence; or for any five years continuous residence since 1939. But undoubtedly the most oppressive requirement is that demanded by those authorities who have established a fixed date, say 1948, for this rules out newcomers completely.

REASONS FOR IMPOSING RESIDENTIAL QUALIFICATIONS

17. Local authorities in their evidence most frequently advanced the following reasons for imposing a residential qualification, which we discuss in subsequent paragraphs :—

- (1) To give preference to local residents in housing need.
- (2) To discourage the entry into the district of newcomers who, in some cases, might obtain preference by living in overcrowded conditions.
- (3) To restrict the length of the list.
- (4) Because shortage of land curtails the building programme of the authority.

PREFERENCE TO LOCAL RESIDENTS: DISCOURAGING NEWCOMERS

18. The idea of giving preference to local residents is commonly related to the duty of housing authorities under Section 71 of the Housing Act, 1936, to consider the housing needs of their district. Some authorities appear to have interpreted this as meaning the housing needs of those families who have lived for a long time in the district. Undoubtedly public opinion locally—more particularly opinion among others on the waiting-list—does in some areas encourage authorities to take this view. We think that housing authorities should avoid interpreting their responsibilities too narrowly; they are the housing authorities as much for those obliged to seek accommodation in their area as for the actual residents. Families in housing need who have lived a long time in the district undoubtedly have a claim on their authority, but not to the exclusion of those who have sound reasons for living in the district, frequently to enable them to live near their work. It seems to us reasonable to draw a distinction between those who wish to live in a district because they are employed there, and those who have chosen it only because it is a pleasant area to which to retire or from which to travel daily to work elsewhere. If there is adverse criticism when an authority let houses to recent comers to a district, we believe that a full statement of the reasons would help to still any disquiet in the public mind about the council's practice.

19. Some authorities who seek to deter newcomers by the use of residential qualifications do so because they fear that families will arrive in the district and, by occupying accommodation in which they would be seriously overcrowded, will gain priority for a house. It is equally desirable to prevent conduct of this kind by those already resident in the area. Many authorities have successfully made it clear, without imposing on all applicants a long residential qualification, that a deliberate worsening of a family's living conditions would not ensure rapid rehousing. For instance, one authority from whom we received evidence stated that points for insanitary conditions or overcrowding would not be taken into account for two years if these conditions had resulted from a voluntary move into worse accommodation. It should be noted in passing that local authorities have adequate powers under Part IV of the Housing Act, 1936, to deal with overcrowding.

RESTRICTIONS ON THE WAITING-LIST

20. To restrict the length of the list merely because an authority are reluctant to increase their expenditure on housing, or because they regard the houses they own as a sufficient proportion of the total houses within their area, is in our view incompatible with the statutory duty of a housing authority so long as there is housing need in the district which cannot be satisfied by other means, e.g., by the renting of privately-owned property or house-purchase. We are indeed aware that the maintenance of a large waiting-list may be an expensive item in a local authority's housing budget, but authorities have an obligation to keep themselves informed about the housing demand in their district, which cannot be satisfactorily fulfilled if they exclude particular classes of people for reasons quite unconnected with their housing need. We think, therefore, that the cost of the waiting-list should be regarded as a legitimate charge upon public funds, since we believe that a person in genuine housing need should never be in a position in which he cannot get on to a housing list.

21. It is important, however, that the list should reveal the true position, and therefore it should not include the names of those who no longer need accommodation. The authorities who require applicants to re-register every year find that they lose a proportion of their applicants in the process. We think all local authorities would be well advised to ensure that their waiting-list is reviewed at least every two years.

22. A waiting-list may be restricted by means which appear to us less open to objection than by the imposition of a residential qualification. A local authority is not obliged to provide houses for those already adequately housed, and many authorities, for example, differentiate between applicants who have no separate home of their own and those who, though wishing for a more modern house, are already householders. Some authorities classify applications according to their degree of need; those in the first category are those whose need is urgent; the second category contains those whose need is less urgent but sufficient to justify consideration; and those in the third category may be regarded as having insufficient need to justify at the moment the provision of a council house. It should not be overlooked that the requirements of those in the last category may sometimes be met by exchanges with other householders.

23. Alternatively, in those areas where there is not enough building land available to provide for all those in need of houses, the classification may show those in need of housing for whom the council hope to provide in their own area, those in need of housing for whom they are unable to provide, and those not regarded as in serious need. Such classifications, while not directly reducing the number of names registered, must make the list more manageable. We suggest that those authorities whose lists are very long might consider the advantage of breaking them down in these ways, rather than restricting them by excluding some applicants altogether.

DUPLICATION OF APPLICATIONS

24. A number of authorities have expressed their concern at the amount of duplication which occurs. While it is certainly undesirable that families should have their names on countless housing lists, we can see no objection to their being on two or possibly three lists, provided they inform each authority what other authorities they have applied to.

QUALIFICATIONS BASED ON A FIXED DATE

25. There are some local authorities, mainly in the London area, whose requirements for admission to the list take the form of residence in the area before a fixed date. In these places applications are accepted only from people who lived in the area on or before, say, January, 1946, or July, 1948. As a result, these areas contain, as time passes, an increasing number of families whose need of a house, however urgent, can never be examined because they can never be admitted to the waiting-list. We are convinced that such a situation is undesirable and we accordingly recommend the abolition of the fixed date method as a qualification for admission to the waiting-list.

CLOSED LISTS

26. A few authorities have closed their lists completely. They are mainly, but not solely, authorities who have little land left for building. Among them are a few who maintain a closed list, but open it from time to time. Since applicants never know when it is going to be open, they are at some disadvantage in attempting to get their names on the list. We have already made plain our views on the practice of authorities who seek to limit their waiting-lists by stringent residential qualifications. Our objections to closed lists are even stronger. It may be said that it is no help to a man to put his name on a list if there is no prospect of housing him in the area, and that it will involve the authority in additional work in registering applications. These arguments, however, should apply only to those applicants who are adequately housed. For those in need the list should be kept open, and if necessary the provision of housing elsewhere can then be considered.

SHORTAGE OF BUILDING LAND

27. As we have already pointed out in paragraph 16, there is a greater emphasis on residential qualifications in urban areas. The peculiar difficulties of the local authorities who are rapidly exhausting their available building land would appear to lend weight to the claim that in these places the imposition of a residential qualification is inevitable. Some of these authorities pointed out that the number of dwellings they could provide in their own district was strictly limited and in some cases far smaller than the number of present applicants in urgent need. There are among these authorities a number who are already building in the area of a neighbouring authority. Other authorities in a position to do so will no doubt make similar arrangements in time. But there remain a considerable number of authorities, largely but not exclusively in the Greater London area, who cannot find land in immediately adjoining areas and who might seem to be justifiably reluctant to add people to their waiting-list. It is, therefore, all the more interesting to note that of the thirty housing authorities within the inner London area, nineteen admit to their housing lists anyone resident for one year within their respective areas. It is true that five of these require a longer period of residence before the allocation of a house, but at least all these authorities are able to assess the extent of the need in their area even if it cannot be met there. It might be said that a waiting-list compiled in these circumstances would be quite unrealistic, because the local authority cannot hope

to house more than a fraction of the applicants on it. We consider it more realistic to face the full extent of the demand, so that it can be seen what provision should be made elsewhere, rather than to exclude from consideration altogether those who have not lived three, five or ten years within a particular local authority's boundary.

THE INDUSTRIAL SELECTION SCHEME FOR NEW AND EXPANDED TOWNS

28. To assist in solving the acute housing problem in the Greater London Region and in other big conurbations, Parliament has passed the New Towns Act and the Town Development Act, which provide powers for the building of New Towns and the expansion of existing towns. There are arrangements now in operation to enable families in the area of seventy-six London authorities, and in Salford, to move to a New or Expanded Town, through the Industrial Selection Scheme. This scheme is run by the Ministry of Labour in co-operation with the local authorities concerned, and is based on registers of people in housing need who are willing to move. These registers are compiled by the local authorities within the scheme, and are classified according to trade or employment. They form a pool from which the Ministry of Labour seek to meet the demand from employers in the New or Expanded Towns for men and women of suitable occupations. We understand that the Ministry of Labour would welcome the strengthening of the registers as far as possible, so as to ensure that an adequate supply of applicants with the required experience is readily available when needed.

29. This scheme will operate to the maximum advantage of those in housing need only if local authorities who take part in it include in their registers all families willing to move out without excluding those who would not normally qualify for admission to the waiting-list. It is a fact that for many families participation in the Industrial Selection Scheme may afford their only prospect of obtaining a house. We understand, moreover, that some authorities are willing to include in the register only those applicants with a high priority for a house within their area. This has a double disadvantage: applicants who know they are likely to be housed by their own local authority may not wish to move to a New or Expanded Town, whilst those who have no such prospect and might be willing to move are denied the opportunity. It has been suggested to us that some authorities restrict nominations to the register because they are reluctant to pay for ten years the rate fund contribution for families from their area who are rehoused in the New or Expanded Towns. We are unwilling to believe that this is so, since these families may have a housing need which but for the shortage of land the local authorities would themselves have met at much greater cost. We believe that 'exporting' authorities should give whole-hearted support to the Industrial Selection Scheme, since for thousands of families a New or Expanded Town offers the most hopeful alternative to remaining indefinitely in shared or overcrowded accommodation. To that end none of these authorities should prevent the admission to their industrial registers of families in housing need by means of residential qualifications or other limiting devices.

30. In paragraph 16 we have already remarked on the variety of qualifications which exist. There certainly appears to be some difficulty as a result of this wide diversity. The ordinary applicant cannot understand why there should be big differences in local authority practice, and the man who moves to a new district to find that the residential requirements are longer than they were in his previous district is naturally critical. It is true, of course, that it is not the diversity itself which may prevent him getting on to any list; it is the length and nature of the qualifications imposed by particular authorities. This diversity has, in addition, important effects on the practice of individual local authorities; those who require only a short period of residence sometimes find themselves embarrassed by their neighbours who impose longer periods. They have to accept applications from people whose claim on the area they regard as slight, who have better reasons for applying to a neighbouring authority and who would certainly do so but for the more stringent qualifications imposed there. As a consequence, housing demand is distorted. One authority submitting evidence felt obliged to apologise for their parochial attitude, but instanced the practice of their neighbours as a reason for increasing their own requirements.

31. It is obviously undesirable that applicants should seek housing in one area simply because the residential qualification is shorter than elsewhere; it is equally undesirable that local authorities should lengthen their requirements in order to discourage this, since this adversely affects applicants with a genuine claim in the area. We believe that this situation can best be avoided by the adoption of a uniform period of residence before admission to the list. One London authority pointed the way to the first step when they wrote to us: 'the Council do not themselves consider a residential qualification is a measure of housing need, and they would welcome the recognition of this principle by all other authorities'. Quite a number of authorities in their evidence expressed concern at the difficulties due to lack of uniformity and were anxious to overcome them. We think this can only be dealt with by consultation among the authorities themselves. We therefore urge authorities in any areas where variations exist in residential requirements for admission to the list—particularly the authorities in the big centres of population where people frequently move across local government boundaries and where the housing problem is basically the same—to discuss with each other how best to bring their practice into line. They and they alone have power to remove a serious obstacle to the satisfactory working of any system for selecting tenants founded on the principle of allocating houses to those in the greatest need.

EMPLOYMENT AS A QUALIFICATION

32. The Third Report recommends that local authorities should accept employment, either actual or in the immediate future, as a qualification for admission to the list. This is important for two reasons. It is obviously desirable that a man should be able to live within reasonable distance of his work should he wish to do so, since there are serious social disadvantages in obliging him to seek a house in the area where he already lives rather than in the area in which he works. Furthermore, it is equally desirable in the national interest as well as in the individual's own interest that there

should be no impediment to people changing their place of employment. A man should feel free to move to an area where labour is needed, but fear of being unable to establish a residential claim elsewhere may tie him to an overcrowded district and discourage him from accepting promotion or seeking better employment in a new place. We were, therefore, glad to find that a large number of local authorities, outside the London area and one or two other large centres of population, accept employment as an alternative to residence. We accept that there are some areas where there is so much employment that it would be impracticable to house there all those who work within them; but in such places special consideration should be given to those who have a strong claim to live near their work, either because of its nature, or because they have to be there before or after public transport is available. For all authorities, except in these areas, we recommend that employment or the firm prospect of employment should be sufficient qualification for admission to the waiting-list.

TRANSFER OF APPLICATIONS

33. It has been suggested that another way of helping a man who moves to a new district would lie in the transfer of his application from the waiting-list of the authority from whose area he came to that of the area which he enters. Thus, having established his position on one list and possibly fulfilled a required period of residence or waiting, he would not have to start again at the beginning in a new place. Where a local authority accept employment in their area as a qualification for admission to the list, there is no need for such transfers, but other authorities may possibly consider this proposal.

TEMPORARY ABSENCE

34. Our attention has been drawn to the plight of families who have had occasion to leave their home district for a short period, and who have consequently had their names removed from the waiting-list. Servicemen's families occasionally suffer in this way and we discuss their problem in Part II. We believe that authorities should exercise reasonable flexibility in coping with this situation—and should not automatically remove the name of a family whose absence is likely to be comparatively short. On the other hand, we consider that it is incumbent on the families themselves to notify the housing manager of their intention to return, so that there shall be no misunderstanding.

CONCLUSIONS ON RECOMMENDATION I

35. In the preceding paragraphs we have discussed the practice of local authorities who require some residential qualification before admission to the list, and we have considered the reasons which are put forward to justify them. To summarise, we find that:—

- (1) It is generally accepted that houses should be allocated to those in the greatest need. The effect of applying a residential qualification before a family is admitted to the list is to delay the examination of need until other tests unrelated to housing conditions have been satisfied.

- (2) Where residential qualifications are imposed, some people in great need of a house are unable to get on any waiting-list. This is most undesirable.
- (3) Admission to the housing list according to residence may prevent people from living near their work and may deter them from leaving the district to take employment elsewhere.
- (4) The restriction of a waiting-list by imposing a residential qualification may prevent the offer of a house in a New or Expanded Town to people who would be eligible for one.
- (5) Even in those areas where the housing problem is most acute many authorities have found it practicable to maintain lists based on one year's residence, while outside these areas a large number of local authorities admit to their lists those who have lived or worked in their districts for one year or less.

36. In view of these considerations we are reluctant to give our support to residential qualifications in any form, and we concur with the opinion expressed in the Third Report that all restrictions on admission to local authorities' waiting-lists should be abolished as soon as conditions permit. In our opinion the time for their removal has now arrived in a large number of districts.

37. In certain areas, however, which we have described in paragraphs 18, 27 and 32, as (i) the areas of special residential attraction, (ii) the areas short of building land, and (iii) the areas having an exceptional amount of employment, it might reasonably be held that their abolition is not practicable. We urge most strongly that local authorities in these areas should implement the first recommendation in the Third Report, that is to say, that, as a first step towards complete abolition, the local authorities who now impose any restrictions should reduce them to a uniform level, and should accept an application from any person who at the date of application has lived in the district for one year or more. We also believe that the local authorities in areas (i) and (ii) should accept an application from any person who is employed or is to be employed there. Our opinion that these recommendations are not only desirable but also practicable is confirmed by the many authorities whose housing problem is acute, but whose policy is nevertheless in accordance with them.

RESIDENCE AND THE SELECTION OF TENANTS

38. Admission to the housing list is the first but essential step in the selection of tenants. We do not propose to examine in any detail here the various methods housing authorities employ to assist them in considering the allocation of houses. What is common to quite a number of these methods, however, is that the local authority attach some weight to the length of time the applicant has lived in the district. Most frequently this is done by awarding points for residence or by requiring a period of residence—possibly for as long as five years—before an applicant can be considered on the basis of housing need. The period, as might be expected, tends to be longest, or the points for residence highest, in areas where the demand is greatest and most difficult to meet. As in the case of admission to the waiting-list, the feeling seems to be that local residents should be given some

preference. Some authorities in fact delay the allocation of a house to those whose connection with their areas is comparatively recent. It is of the first importance that allocations should be based on housing need, which cannot be measured by counting years of residence. We are consequently opposed to over-emphasis on residence in any allocation system, since this must tend to discount weight given to purely housing considerations. Where, however, a local authority determine that a number of its applicants are in equal need we can see no objection to taking account of length of residence as a means of arranging the applicants in order of priority. But, in the words of the Third Report, residence should be used only as a 'balancing factor'.

39. Nevertheless, however limited the extent to which points for residence are used, there may always be cases of hardship wherever people move from one district to another, and we have considered a suggestion that it might be possible to transfer applications from one authority to another with accumulated points or position on the list. The idea is attractive, but local authorities' systems for the selection of tenants are so varied that it would be difficult for us to devise in detail a satisfactory method of translating a man's position in terms of one system to another. We commend to local authorities the possibility of giving a newcomer points for time on the waiting-list of another district in lieu of residence.

CONCLUSION ON RECOMMENDATION II

40. In conclusion we confirm the second recommendation in the Third Report, 'that local authorities should ensure that, once an applicant is admitted to the waiting-list, his prospects of accommodation are not prejudiced because undue weight is attached to long residence when tenants are selected'.

PART II

Residential Qualifications and the Regular Serviceman

41. The problem of the regular serviceman is not a unique one. It exists for civilians who like him have severed their ties with their home town or district. The recommendations which we have reaffirmed in Part I would, if universally adopted, resolve in almost all cases the difficulties which servicemen and civilians alike experience through residential qualifications. Nevertheless, we decided to examine the housing problem of regular servicemen as a separate subject because there has been a good deal of disquiet about the situation in which some of them find themselves both during their service and on their discharge, and it is important that they should not be at a disadvantage compared with civilians. We are only concerned in this part of our Report with the problems of the regular serviceman and not with those of the national serviceman; the latter has not the same difficulties since he usually retains his connection with his district.

42. It has been impressed on us that there are really two quite separate problems. The first occurs when the serviceman's family are seeking a home whilst the husband is away. Quite frequently the serviceman's wife stays in her own district, living with her parents until she has children; then naturally she begins to look for a home of her own and in many cases tries to get on to the local authority's housing list. If the wife has lived in the district for a number of years there is not likely to be any difficulty over residential qualifications, but there may be if the serviceman's wife decides to move to a district where she can be near her husband or to a place where her husband intends to work when he leaves the service. We understand that the need for a house during service is much more frequent among sailors than among soldiers or airmen, since the Navy have only a few married quarters available.

43. The married soldier or airman, on the other hand, has a reasonable chance of securing married quarters during part of his service. We were informed that at the moment rather more than half the married men in the two services occupy married quarters, and it is the policy of the War Office and Air Ministry to provide ultimately, so far as it is compatible with service conditions, married quarters for families of all regular servicemen. It is apparent, therefore, that the problem of housing for soldiers and airmen generally presents itself at a much later stage than for the sailor—increasingly, in fact, it becomes a problem only as they near the end of their service. The serviceman is then faced with two difficulties. He needs a home and he needs a job. Because of the housing shortage his choice may lie between taking a job, for which he is well qualified by the special skills he may have acquired during his service, in an area where he has little hope of obtaining accommodation, or of accepting work less appropriate to his training and capacity in an area where there is prospect of a house. Assuming, however, that he has made up his mind where he wants to live, he may conclude that his best chance of getting a house is through the local authority. He therefore applies to them, only to be told in some cases that he cannot immediately be admitted to the housing list because neither he nor his family possess the requisite residential qualification, and the local authority do not accept employment as an alternative. If this occurs he may be at a serious disadvantage since by his absence in the services he may have no claim on any other area. Similarly, his wife and family also may be unable to satisfy any residential qualifications if they have been living in service married quarters for any length of time.

WHAT HAS BEEN DONE TO MEET THESE DIFFICULTIES

44. To assist servicemen in making application to a local authority, either at the end of their service or on behalf of their families during their service, the Minister of Housing and Local Government in circular 8/52* reinforced his earlier advice, given immediately after the war, by asking local authorities to ensure that applications from servicemen were not prejudiced by their lack of residential qualifications. Judging by the evidence we have seen, the response of local authorities has on the whole been good.

* Reprinted as Appendix II.

45. In the vast majority of cases local authorities will accept an application on behalf of a serviceman's family as they would from any other applicant—i.e., where his wife satisfies their usual residential qualification; but we have, we regret to say, heard of instances where local authorities have refused to house the families of servicemen in the absence of the husband. Where the family's existing housing conditions would justify the offer of a tenancy, were the husband at home, we consider such a refusal unwarranted.

46. The majority of authorities will accept an application from a serviceman seeking a house after his discharge without asking for a residential qualification provided the serviceman, or in some cases his wife, lived in the district at some time before his enlistment. About half the local authorities consulted, but a proportionately greater number outside London, said they would accept applications from men who took up residence or secured employment in the district after their discharge. One or two authorities make it a condition that servicemen should apply within six months after leaving the forces. A number of authorities not in the two groups above informed us that they gave special consideration to servicemen, implying that they accepted their applications if circumstances warranted it. In support of this we can point to the fact that of the thirty-seven authorities outside the London Region whom we consulted only two make no concession to regular servicemen, and that among the twenty-eight Metropolitan Boroughs twenty-one make some special concession.

47. One or two authorities in their evidence suggested that the Service Departments might do more to advise men how to make applications. We therefore asked them to let us know their practice. They informed us that, after consultation with the Ministry of Housing and Local Government, guidance on the making of applications to housing authorities had been issued. These instructions* point out that most local authorities are more favourably disposed to applicants who have previously resided or have secured employment in their district, but warn servicemen that the responsibility for the allocation of council houses rests with the local authority, who are expected to deal with applications on the basis of relative housing need. This advice had been brought to the attention of servicemen less formally on unit and mess noticeboards; and in March this year the War Office and the Air Ministry issued instructions that all married regular servicemen were to be reminded from time to time about the difficulties of the housing situation, about the correct method of applying to housing authorities and the need to make application at the earliest possible date. The Admiralty Fleet Order is brought to the notice of all regular sailors every six months. In all three services men can seek the help and advice of their senior officers, and in the Army the staff of the Royal Army Education Corps have been given the special task of assisting soldiers with their housing problems. In all three services, cases of exceptional difficulty or great hardship are referred to the Service Departments and, if necessary, to the Ministry of Housing and Local Government.

* Admiralty Fleet Order 2066/53.
Army Council Instruction 273/51.
Air Ministry Order A100/51.

48. Some local authorities have complained that servicemen as a general rule do not make their applications soon enough. We have tried to find out if anything could be done about this. As we have mentioned in paragraph 43, the serviceman nearing discharge is trying to do two things at once—to get a house and to get a job. The services have now done what they can to see that he knows how to apply to a local authority and they have stressed that he should do so as soon as possible ; but they cannot tell him where to apply. Unless the serviceman has already chosen his district, it is likely that he will delay making an application until he sees more clearly what opportunities there are for suitable employment in particular areas. Some servicemen may wish to await the outcome of their Resettlement Boards or interviews, at which there is usually present an officer of the Ministry of Labour and National Service. In the case of the Army this Board is held three to six months before a man's discharge and we understand cannot reasonably be held earlier. We should point out, however, that a member of any of the services may at any time seek advice about employment from one of the local offices of the Ministry of Labour, either personally or by letter. But it may be the case that a serviceman has made no definite progress towards his new job by the time he leaves the service, and in consequence he may still be undecided about the district in which he wishes to settle. For these reasons we cannot be sanguine that the advice to apply early to local authorities can invariably be followed.

LIMITATIONS ON THE PROVISION OF HOUSES BY LOCAL AUTHORITIES FOR SERVICEMEN

49. We have mentioned in paragraph 47 that the Service Departments have warned servicemen that the selection of tenants rests with the housing authority and that the usual basis of selection is housing need. As we have already stated, admission to a housing list is only a first step towards consideration of the applicant's claims. In the case of a serviceman, even when a local authority have waived their residential requirements and the serviceman has his name on the waiting-list, his application still has to stand comparison with those of other applicants on the basis of actual housing need. Neither the Ministry, the Service Departments nor the servicemen's organisations have asked that local authorities should give preference to servicemen. Local authorities have certain statutory duties but they are under no more obligation to servicemen than to any other member of the community—though, indeed, they are under no less. Most authorities, we believe, have a good deal of sympathy with servicemen but they must consider equally the other applicants on their list. We are of the opinion that they should give the serviceman parity of treatment with the civilian. We realise that few authorities are able to give an applicant a house immediately he needs it, whether he be a civilian or a serviceman ; and in some cases a council may not offer one at all if they consider the family to be adequately housed.

50. In some places even those who are inadequately housed may have little prospect of getting a council house within the foreseeable future. Generally these are the areas where local authorities are already forced to house some of their population outside their area, and where shortage of building land and the number of those in housing need give many people but a small

chance of obtaining a council house. We consider, therefore, that unless a serviceman has a particular reason for returning to these areas—for example, a firm offer of employment or strong associations with a place—he would be well advised to seek work and a house elsewhere.

MARRIED QUARTERS

51. One particular problem we should like to discuss at this stage arises from the occupation of married quarters. The policy of the Army and Air Force is to provide quarters for married regular servicemen over the age of twenty-one, who are likely to remain on a station for longer than six months. At the moment there are insufficient quarters for the number of applicants and these are allocated by a points system based on length of service, the number of children, and the length of separation of a man from his family. The Service Departments clearly cannot face indefinitely the continued occupation of married quarters by families of men who have been posted elsewhere or reached the end of their service. Some of these families have no home of their own to go to and sometimes apply to the local authority in whose district they are living at the time. We have heard of some cases where they have been obliged to do this because they have been refused admission to the waiting-list of the local authority of their choice. These are, we believe, very rare. More frequently, we suspect, the serviceman has neglected to do anything about finding other accommodation before his family have to vacate their quarters.

52. The local authorities in whose districts there are large numbers of married quarters complain very strongly about the number of applications they receive from servicemen who have no previous association with the district and no permanent employment there. Some authorities tend to blame the Service Departments for allocating married quarters too near the end of a man's service; others believe that the Services could do more to see that servicemen in married quarters make applications to a suitable local authority at an earlier stage in their service. We have been assured by the Service Departments that married quarters are not allocated to men who have less than six months to serve before discharge, and as we have already pointed out the Service Departments do what they can to ensure that applications for council houses are made as early as possible and to the most appropriate authority. They are, we realise, understandably reluctant to evict families, and we have been informed that there must be a prospect of shelter for the wife and children before they are actually evicted. But the necessity for eviction does arise from time to time and the local authorities have then to see what they can do for the family—either by offering a house, or in other cases by the welfare authority providing temporary shelter.

53. Apart from evictions from married quarters there are a number of people in civil life who are obliged to vacate houses which go with the job. We do not under-estimate the human and social problems which may arise wherever eviction takes place, and we hope to deal with some of them in our report on the second part of our terms of reference. We realise that it would almost certainly give rise to difficulties if local authorities were to provide houses automatically for evicted families; it might in fact lead to a far greater number of evictions, some even inspired by tenants in an effort

to obtain priority for rehousing. There is, in fact, no easy solution to the general problem, nor can we do more than make two suggestions about evictions from married quarters. Firstly, we think the Service Departments should continue to impress on servicemen that they will have to vacate married quarters on posting or at the end of their service, and that they must make every effort to find accommodation for themselves and their families before this happens. Secondly, where a serviceman wants a council house he should make his application to the local authority as soon as he knows where he intends to live. For their part, local authorities should accept an application without applying tests which, because of his service, must inevitably harm his prospects of obtaining a house.

ALTERNATIVE MEANS OF SECURING A HOUSE

54. We are conscious that in dealing with some of the wider aspects of housing for regular servicemen we are straying from the strict limit of our terms of reference. We feel, however, that it would be unrealistic to conclude our Report without discussing very briefly the steps which are open to servicemen to find a house. There has been a tendency since the war to regard local authorities as the sole source of rented housing accommodation. In fact in 1953 there were 7½ million privately-owned rented houses as against 2½ million council houses. Despite the undoubted difficulties which exist in seeking to rent privately-owned accommodation, vacancies do occur and servicemen should not neglect any opportunity of securing a tenancy.

HOUSE PURCHASE

55. At the present time one-third of new house building is by private enterprise. A number of these houses are not being built to order but are erected by private builders for sale in the open market. The Government, with the aid of the building societies and the local authorities, has this year been endeavouring to bring house purchase within the means of a greater number of people. In order to reduce the amount of the initial deposit there are certain arrangements for prospective purchasers to borrow up to 95 per cent. of the purchase price of a house from a building society with the aid of a guarantee from the local authority. These facilities are available not only for newly-built houses but also for the older houses. It seemed to us that house purchase might present real possibilities to the regular serviceman, particularly to the long-term man with twenty-two years' service who receives both a gratuity and a pension. These men in some cases might find their gratuity and pension sufficient to provide for both deposit and mortgage repayment. For the man with service of more than ten years we understand that there is a gratuity payable on completion of service which rises with each year of additional service. This in itself might not be sufficient to cover the deposit, but the War Office informed us that they were examining the prospects of organising a house savings scheme to work by deductions from pay through the Army National Savings movement. With gratuity and savings combined servicemen might have enough capital to embark on buying a house. Information about the financial help available through local authorities by means of loans under the Small Dwellings Acquisition Acts and the Housing Act, 1949, or about guarantees of building society loans, can be obtained on enquiry from local council offices.

56. We think, too, that it would be worth considering the formation of housing associations for building houses in areas where employment suited to the skills and training of servicemen is available. Housing associations normally exist to provide houses for letting, and by arrangement with the local authority of the area they may become eligible for Exchequer and rate fund subsidies. While they can usually borrow up to 90 per cent. of the capital required from the local authority, they are obliged to find the remaining 10 per cent. themselves. We think it possible that the servicemen's voluntary organisations, regimental associations etc., as well as private individuals such as retired service officers, might be willing to play a part in the formation of housing associations for ex-regular servicemen.* We understand that the War Office are examining what might be done by this means.

NEW TOWNS

57. Finally, we think there is scope for some servicemen to be absorbed into the twelve New Towns which are being established to relieve congestion and overcrowding in London, and for certain special purposes elsewhere. It is essential, however, for a serviceman first to obtain employment in a New Town before applying for a house there, and if he wishes to move to one of the eight London New Towns he must, with rare exceptions, either be a Londoner himself or his family must now reside in London. The Ministry of Labour and National Service will endeavour to find a job for a serviceman in a New Town, but success will depend very largely on the suitability of the serviceman for the vacancies available in particular industries. Once a man has a job there may be some delay in offering him a house, but we understand that Development Corporations can almost certainly guarantee one in course of time. Details of these arrangements have been set out in an article which appeared in the Services Resettlement Bulletin, No. 10/54, issued by the Institute of Army Education on behalf of the three Service Departments.

SUMMARY OF ADVICE TO SERVICEMEN ON HOUSING

58. We think it would be useful if the attention of servicemen could be drawn to the following points:

- (1) The possibility of renting a privately-owned house should not be overlooked. Applications should be made locally to estate agents and landlords.
- (2) There is an increasing amount of private building, mostly for sale. In addition there is always a certain amount of older property for sale. The names of private builders in a particular area can be obtained from the National Housebuilders' Registration Council† or usually from the local authority.

* Information and advice may be obtained from the National Federation of Housing Societies, 12 Suffolk Street, S.W.1.

† The address of the Council is 82, New Cavendish Street, W.1.

- (3) Both building societies and local authorities lend money for house purchase and local authorities have powers to guarantee building society loans. Information about building society loans may be obtained on application to a society and about local authority loans and guarantees from any council offices.
- (4) Applications to a local authority for a house after discharge should be made (a) to the authority of the district in which the serviceman hopes to work, or (b) to the authority with whose area he has some connection. They should be made as early as possible. If a regular serviceman finds work in a different district soon after his discharge he should apply at once to his new local authority, if he hopes to claim any special concessions as an ex-serviceman.
- (5) An application to a local authority for a house for a family during service should be made to the district where the serviceman or his wife have some connection.
- (6) Applications should not be made to authorities which plan to 'export' population, or to garrison towns and military or naval districts, unless the serviceman has definite employment there, or some strong association with the area, e.g., previous residence.
- (7) Applications for council houses are generally considered on the basis of relative housing need, and it may, therefore, be some time before a house will be made available.
- (8) It is advisable to keep the housing department of the local authority informed of any change of address or, in the case of applications on behalf of families, of any temporary absence of the family from the district; the best way to get information about the prospect of obtaining a tenancy is to ask for an appointment at the local housing department.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO LOCAL AUTHORITIES

59. In paragraphs 42 and 43 we attempted to show that regular servicemen's housing problems could be divided into two classes, housing for families during service and housing after discharge from the Services. Applications to local authorities on behalf of regular servicemen's families present difficulty mainly where the man's wife lacks the required residential qualification. This would frequently be avoided if authorities reduced their qualification to one year or abandoned it completely as we have recommended. In dealing with these applications we do not think we can improve on the formula drafted by the Service Departments, the Ministry of Health and representative local authority associations in 1948, and commended by the Minister of Housing and Local Government in Circular 8/52: 'Heads of families who on national service grounds are absent from their families on duty, e.g. regular serving sailors, soldiers and airmen, Control Commission staff, seamen etc., shall be counted as part of the family for the purpose of determining priority, but in allotting accommodation no provision shall necessarily be made for the head of the family unless his return home is imminent'.

60. We endorse the further advice given to local authorities in Circular 8/52. We believe that applications from servicemen for housing after their

discharge should not be prejudiced by their lack of the requisite residential qualification. We express our appreciation of what local authorities have so far done to relax their normal residential requirements, but we recommend all authorities, except those who are already obliged to 'export' population and those with service establishments in their areas, who may feel they cannot comply, to waive their requirements completely. These excepted authorities should, we believe, waive their normal requirements if the serviceman has obtained employment in their area, if the serviceman or his wife lived in the district previously, or if the parents of either live there now.

61. We consider that local authorities should ensure that any weight given to residence in selecting tenants does not prejudice the claims of servicemen seeking houses on their discharge. They should be put into exactly the same group or category as they would have been had they been living in the area of their choice instead of being absent on service. Where points for residence are used as a 'balancing factor' we consider that servicemen should be awarded a comparable number of points for length of service. A number of authorities already do this. These points are not the same as those for war service which are presumably given to regular servicemen and civilians alike. For these we no longer see any justification.

62. We feel we ought to draw the attention of local authorities to the question of length of service. Some authorities at the moment waive their residential requirements only where men have served particular terms, say twelve or fifteen years. It seems fairly clear that the length of engagement has undergone a significant change since the war, and it appears that the short service engagement is very much the most popular. Anything more than seven years could now, it seems, be regarded as long service. In our view length of service is no more relevant than length of residence to problems of housing need, and it may in some cases be just as much a hardship to impose a residence test on a man with short service as on a long-term serviceman. In suggesting points for length of service in our previous paragraph we do so only to compensate a man for lack of points for residence—and we believe points for either purpose should only be used as a 'balancing factor'.

63. In conclusion we should like to mention a difficulty which has been put to us by the Service Departments. It is inevitable that as married quarters become available most families, in seeking to join their husbands for a period, must leave the district in which they normally live. We recommend (i) that local authorities should not remove the name of a serviceman's wife from the waiting list provided she is not absent for longer than two to three years—the normal maximum length of a posting overseas, and (ii) that any such period of absence should count as part of the period of qualification for any residential requirement. There is the further case of the family who have been fortunate enough to obtain a council tenancy during the husband's service, but wish to avail themselves of the opportunity to join him in married quarters for a spell. It has been suggested to us that the tenant should be allowed to sub-let the house. We consider there would be serious difficulties in permitting this. As an alternative we suggest that local authorities might give an undertaking to rehouse the family, if it were reasonably possible, on their return. Failing such an arrangement it seems likely that the wife would feel obliged to forego the opportunity of joining her husband.

Summary of Conclusions and Recommendations

PART I

Recommendations I and II of the Housing Management Sub-Committee's Third Report

1. There are some families who are unable to get on to any local authority housing list because they do not possess the residential qualification required by their present local authority and they have lost their claim on their previous local authorities. (Paragraphs 9 to 12.)

2. Thus, in some cases, families whose housing need is serious cannot be considered until they have been resident for the due period of time. (Paragraph 13.)

3. Until applications are accepted for investigation and consideration there can be no assurance that houses will in fact be let to those in the greatest need. (Paragraph 15.)

4. Local authorities advance four main reasons for requiring residential qualifications. (Paragraph 17.)

5. The desire to give preference to residents of long standing should not lead local authorities to interpret their statutory responsibilities for housing too narrowly. (Paragraph 18.)

6. Residential qualifications are sometimes used to deter newcomers from entering the district and overcrowding accommodation, thus gaining priority for a house. Local authorities can prevent deliberate overcrowding by other and better means. (Paragraph 19.)

7. The length of the waiting-list should not be restricted by the use of residential qualifications. The cost of maintaining the list, however long, should be regarded as a legitimate charge on public funds. (Paragraph 20.)

8. All authorities should review their waiting-lists at least every two years. (Paragraph 21.)

9. By classifying their applications according to the degree of housing need local authorities may make their lists more manageable. (Paragraphs 22 to 23.)

10. Any system of admission to the waiting-list based on residence at a fixed date should be abolished. (Paragraph 25.)

11. Waiting-lists should not be closed. (Paragraph 26.)

12. Authorities who, through lack of building land, cannot rehouse all their applicants, should not for that reason refuse applications, but should accept them in order that the full extent of the need in their areas may be assessed. (Paragraph 27.)

13. The Industrial Selection Scheme for the transfer of families to New and Expanded Towns needs the fullest support of the local authorities concerned. To that end none of these authorities should restrict admission to their industrial registers by means of residential qualifications or other limiting devices. (Paragraphs 28 and 29.)

14. Lack of uniformity in the residential qualifications imposed by neighbouring authorities creates difficulties; adjoining authorities in the big centres of population are urged to discuss with each other how best to bring their practice into line. (Paragraphs 30 and 31.)

15. With certain exceptions, local authorities should accept employment or the firm prospect of employment in the district as a qualification for admission to the waiting-list. (Paragraph 32.)

16. Local authorities should not automatically remove from their waiting-list those who are temporarily absent from the district. (Paragraph 34.)

17. The time has now come for the removal of all residential qualifications in a large number of districts. (Paragraph 36.)

18. There are three classes of area where their abolition may not be practicable. In these, local authorities should adopt the first recommendation of the Sub-Committee's Third Report, namely, that as a first step towards the abolition of all residential qualifications those authorities who still impose them should reduce them to a uniform level and accept an application from any person who has lived in the district for one year. Local authorities in two of these classes of area should in addition, accept an application from any person who is employed or to be employed there. (Paragraph 37.)

19. If a local authority when selecting tenants judge a number of applicants to be in equal need, there is no objection to taking account of residence as a means of arranging them in order of priority. (Paragraph 38.)

20. Where local authorities give weight to residence in such cases they might consider giving points to newcomers for time spent on another local authority's waiting-list in lieu of points for residence. (Paragraph 39.)

21. The second recommendation of the Sub-Committee's Third Report should be accepted, namely, that local authorities should ensure that once an applicant is admitted to the waiting-list his prospects of accommodation are not prejudiced because undue weight is attached to long residence when tenants are selected. (Paragraph 40.)

PART II

Residential Qualifications and the Regular Serviceman

22. Servicemen may be seeking houses either for their families during their service or after discharge from the service. The first problem is the more likely to affect sailors; the second, soldiers and airmen. (Paragraphs 42 and 43.)

23. Where servicemen's applications to local authorities are refused because they lack the requisite residential qualification they may be at a serious disadvantage, since by their absence in the services they may have no claim on any other authority. (Paragraph 43.)

24. Applications from servicemen's wives are normally accepted if they possess the authority's usual residential qualifications. A few authorities refuse to house wives in the absence of the husband. This is unwarranted. (Paragraph 45.)

25. All authorities having admitted servicemen to their lists should see that they receive parity of treatment with civilian applicants. (Paragraph 49.)

26. Servicemen should, if possible, avoid applying for a house to a local authority who are already forced to house some of their population outside their area. (Paragraph 50.)

27. Servicemen who want a council house should apply as early as possible before the date on which they must vacate married quarters. (Paragraph 53.)

28. Servicemen should not neglect the opportunity of renting a privately-owned house. House purchase may be a possibility. (Paragraphs 54 and 55.)

29. Consideration should be given to the formation of housing associations for ex-servicemen. (Paragraph 56.)

30. Some servicemen may be housed in the New Towns provided they get employment there ; in the case of the eight London New Towns a residential connection with London is also required. (Paragraph 57.)

31. The attention of servicemen should be drawn to the following points ; the possibility of renting, buying or building a house ; the making of applications to local authorities ; the advantages of keeping in touch with the local housing department. (Paragraph 58.)

32. There will rarely be difficulty in accepting applications from servicemen's wives if local authorities will accept the recommendations made in Part I. In considering applications, local authorities should take account of the formula drafted by the Service Departments, the Ministry of Health and representative local authority associations. (Paragraph 59.)

33. All local authorities, except those obliged to 'export' population and those with service establishments in their areas, should waive their residential qualifications in the case of applications from servicemen for houses on their discharge. The excepted authorities should waive their requirements where a serviceman has obtained permanent employment in their area or has a residential connection with it. (Paragraph 60.)

34. Local authorities should ensure that any weight given to residence in selecting tenants does not prejudice the consideration of servicemen's applications. (Paragraphs 61 and 62.)

35. Local authorities should not remove the name of a serviceman's wife from their waiting-list if she temporarily joins her husband at his service station. (Paragraph 63.)

We have been fortunate in having Miss M. Empson and Mr. P. J. Harrop, who have been assisted by Mr. J. Palmer, as joint secretaries to the Sub-Committee and we desire to record our appreciation of their services. They

have collected and summarised for us with care and thoroughness the evidence on which our recommendations are based and their sympathetic understanding of the human problems involved in our enquiry has provided a major contribution in enabling us to complete this part of our work within six months of our appointment.

(Signed)

P. L. LEIGH-BREESE (*Chairman*)

WM. R. ALLERTON

B. F. GIBBS

ST. JOHN B. GROSER

G. S. McINTIRE

K. MARR-JOHNSON

D. E. MISKIN

ROSEMARY PORTAL

A. REGINALD STAMP

M. EMPSON

P. J. HARROP

Joint Secretaries

30th November, 1954

APPENDIX I

List of Local Authorities, Organisations and Individuals who have submitted Evidence

<i>Local Authorities</i>		<i>Organisations and Individuals</i>
London County Council		The Admiralty*
Middlesex County Council		The Air Ministry*
City of London		The Association of Municipal Corporations
Metropolitan Borough	Borough Councils of:—	The British Legion
Councils of:—	Acton	Dr. R. Grenville-Mathers
Battersea	Aldershot	The London Council of Social Service
Bermondsey	Altrincham	The National Association for the employment of Regular Sailors, Soldiers and Airmen
Bethnal Green	Andover	The National Council of Women
Camberwell	Barking	The Rural District Councils Association
Chelsea	Beckenham	The Soldiers', Sailors' and Airmen's Families Association
Deptford	Bexley	Dr. H. J. Trenchard
Finsbury	Chingford	The Urban District Councils Association
Fulham	Colchester	The War Office*
Greenwich	Dagenham	
Hackney	Ealing	
Hammersmith	Edmonton	
Hampstead	Gosport*	
Holborn	Harrow	
Islington	Hendon	
Kensington	Heston & Isleworth	
Lambeth	Ilford	
Lewisham*	Kidderminster	
Paddington	Leyton	
Poplar	Newcastle-under-Lyne	
St. Marylebone	Solihull	
St. Pancras	Tottenham	
Shoreditch	Walthamstow	
Southwark	Wembley*	
Stepney	Willesden	
Stoke Newington	Wimbledon	
Wandsworth		
Westminster		
Woolwich		
County Borough Councils	Urban District Councils	
of:—	of:—	
Birmingham	Bromsgrove	
Bolton	Coulsdon & Purley	
Bristol	Enfield	
Cardiff	Huyton-with-Roby	
Croydon	Orpington	
Darlington	Penarth	
East Ham	Redditch	
Gateshead*	Willenhall	
Leeds	Wilmslow	
Liverpool		
Manchester*	Rural District Councils	
Newcastle-upon-Tyne	of:—	
Newport (Mon.)	Andover	
Portsmouth	Bakewell	
Salford	Bromsgrove	
Sheffield	Chesterfield	
Tynemouth	Croft	
West Ham	Richmond	
Wolverhampton	Seisdon	
	Spilsby	
	Stratford-on-Avon	

In addition, many other persons submitted suggestions and particulars of individual cases to the Sub-Committee.

* The Sub-Committee received oral as well as written evidence from those marked thus.

APPENDIX II

Circular 8/52

MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT,
WHITEHALL,
LONDON, S.W.1.

TO
All Housing Authorities,
County Councils,
(England).

31st January, 1952

Sir,

Housing Management

I. *Applications from Service Men and Women for Housing Accommodation*

1. I am directed by the Minister of Housing and Local Government to state that he is still receiving representations concerning the special difficulties of long service members of H.M. Forces in obtaining housing accommodation on the completion of their service.

2. Many of these serving men have no established association with any particular district. If, therefore, a rigid residential qualification is imposed by the local authority for the area in which they wish to settle after discharge they would, because of their service, be prejudiced in their applications for housing accommodation. The Minister is confident that this is a position which local authorities will be anxious to avoid and that they will agree that these applicants should be given equal priority with others for consideration on the basis of relative housing need.

3. Arrangements made to meet the special difficulties of Service men and women were described in Circular 109/45 issued from the Ministry of Health on 18th June, 1945. Under these arrangements serving officers and men are recommended by the Service authorities to apply to the local authority for the area in which they wish to reside, or intend to take up employment, after discharge, giving particulars of the size of their families and of their present accommodation; and local authorities were asked to consider the claims of such applicants as though they were local residents. These arrangements are still in force.

4. Authorities are also asked similarly to consider applications from the widows of service men killed in action, particularly widows required to vacate married quarters.

5. Local authorities are aware that as a result of consultations in 1948 between the Service Departments, the Ministry of Health and representative Local Government Associations, it was recommended that, in considering applications from Service men, local authorities should be guided by the following formula:

‘Heads of families who, on National Service grounds, are absent from their families on duty, e.g., regular serving sailors, soldiers and airmen, Control Commission staff, seamen, etc., shall be counted as part of the family for the purpose of determining priority, but in allotting accommodation no provision shall necessarily be made for the head of the family unless his return home is imminent’.

The Minister trusts that Authorities will give effect to this recommendation.

II. *Transfers of Tenancies*

6. In paragraphs 64 and 65 of their Report on the Selection of Tenants, the Housing Management Sub-Committee of the Central Housing Advisory Committee recommended that local authorities should facilitate exchanges of tenancies between persons removing on change of employment from one area to another. These exchanges do not prejudice other applicants on the Authorities’ lists since, as the Report points out, neither of the two houses involved would be available for re-letting but for the proposed exchange. The Minister trusts that local authorities will normally consent to such exchanges.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

N. HUTCHINSON.

The Clerk to the Authority.

MINISTRY OF HOUSING
AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Reports of the
Housing Management Sub-Committee
of the Central
Housing Advisory Committee

MANAGEMENT OF MUNICIPAL HOUSING ESTATES

First Report. April, 1938 ... 9d. (10½d.)

Second Report. July, 1945 ... 9d. (10½d.)

SELECTION OF TENANTS AND TRANSFERS AND
EXCHANGES

Third Report. January, 1949 ... 6d. (7½d.)

TRANSFERS, EXCHANGES AND RENTS

Fourth Report. August, 1953 ... 1s. 9d. (1s. 10½d.)

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AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Selected Publications relating to Housing

- HOUSING MANUAL 1949** 3s. 6d. (3s. 11d.)
Technical Appendices 1951 2s. (2s. 2d.)
- HOUSING FOR SPECIAL PURPOSES.** 1st Supplement to the Housing Manual 1949.
Report of the Housing Manual Sub-Committee of the Central Housing Advisory Committee under Extended Terms of Reference. (Chairman: Alderman Sir Miles E. Mitchell, K.B.E., J.P.), November 1950. 2s. (2s. 2d.)
- HOUSES 1952.** 2nd Supplement to the Housing Manual 1949. January 1952.
1s. (1s. 1½d.)
- HOUSES 1953.** 3rd Supplement to the Housing Manual 1949. September 1953.
3s. (3s. 3d.)
- HOUSES THAT SAVE SOFTWOOD.** Record of a Demonstration. April 1953.
1s. 6d. (1s. 7½d.)
- OUR GARDENS.** A Supplement to the Report on the Appearance of Housing Estates. 1948. 1s. (1s. 1½d.)
- LIVING IN FLATS**
Report of the Flats Sub-Committee of the Central Housing Advisory Committee (Chairman: H. Brooke, M.P.). December 1951. 1s. 6d. (1s. 7½d.)
- NEW HOMES FOR OLD.** A handbook on Improvements and Conversions. 1955. 3s. 6d. (3s. 9d.)
- QUICKER COMPLETION OF HOUSE INTERIORS**
Report of the Committee on House Interiors (Chairman: Sir D. C. Bailey, O.B.E., D.Eng.) to the Minister of Housing and Local Government and the Secretary of State for Scotland. December 1952. 3s. 6d. (3s. 9d.)
- STANDARDS OF FITNESS FOR HABITATION**
Report by the Sub-Committee (Chairman: Alderman Sir Miles E. Mitchell, J.P.). October 1946. 6d. (7½d.)

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